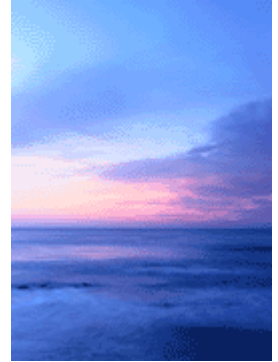


Making Life Easier Program

Setting Healthy Goals

With the start of a new year, many of us think about making positive changes in our lives whether it's to lose weight, save money, or adopt a healthier lifestyle. Yet, the traditional New Year's resolution is often *easily made* and *easily broken*. Some of the keys to successful goal setting include being realistic with the goals you set, developing a plan, and following up on that plan. Below you will find some additional tips and information on how to be successful in setting and achieving your goals year round and not just at the beginning of a new year. Working toward your new goals can lead to a healthier lifestyle, improved self-esteem, and increased confidence.



Children also can benefit from learning how to set and reach goals. It helps them learn how to manage their time and make good decisions—skills that can have a lasting and positive impact on their future.

Be specific.

When thinking about your goal, be as exact as possible. People who set specific goals are more likely to succeed. For example, instead of saying that you want to save money, set a specific goal to save \$20 (or whatever your goal amount is) per week.

Assess the scope of the problem and list the benefits of changing.

If your goal involves changing a problem behavior, start with assessing the scope of the problem by listing all the negative consequences of continuing to engage in the old behavior pattern. Then brainstorm all the things that you would *anticipate* being better *if* you were successful in making that change.

Put it in writing.

Write down exactly what you want to achieve, and post it in a place where you will see it every day. This will help remind you what you're working toward. When you write, use positive terms. For example, instead of writing, "I will stop eating junk food" re-word your goal in more positive terms: "I will make healthy food choices."

Set realistic goals.

When you think about setting goals, make sure that they are within your reach. Be mindful of your finances, schedule, and other personal affairs. Many people forget to think about these important factors and, as a result, they set unrealistic goals for themselves.

Take Inventory.

List all of the resources that are available to you and determine the barriers that might stand in your way to making your desired change.

Develop an action plan.

Create a timeline with action steps toward your goal. Set deadlines for each step and cross them *off* as you go. Sometimes just crossing things *off* and watching your list get smaller can give you a sense of accomplishment and help you to keep going.



Believe in yourself.

Stay positive about your progress. Share your goal with a friend and ask him/her to help keep your spirits up.

Be flexible.

Remember: ***setbacks can happen***. Don't get discouraged and give up. Your hard work will *payoff*!

Reward yourself.

Acknowledge your achievements, even the small ones. Reaching a goal takes hard work and you should be proud of your *efforts*.

The King County Making Life Easier Program with services provided by APS Healthcare is available to help you and your household members achieve a variety of life goals. For confidential assistance with goal setting or other life issues call toll-free 1-888-874-7290.



Source: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration <http://family.samhsa.gov>